

Is Member-Rated Project Success Influenced by Leadership Team Emotional Intelligence

Artemis Chang (QUT), Presenter - Alicia Mazur (QUT), Peter Jordan (Griffith), Jennifer Barbour (Macquarie) and Neal Ashkanasy (UQ).

Contact details: alicia.mazur@qut.edu.au



Introduction

- ❖ Complex projects often result in substantial cost overruns, delays, and failure to meet objectives.
- ❖ There is an imperative to improve our understanding of the factors that can contribute to outcomes of complex projects.
- ❖ We argue that a leader's emotional intelligence (awareness and management of self and others' emotions) is important to ensure the success of large complex projects.
- ❖ Research into the collective effects of a leadership team's characteristics on team success has been limited and sporadic.
- ❖ We examine the association between collective self-ratings of a leadership team's EI and their subordinate team members' ratings of critical project success factors.

Methods

- ❖ **Sample:** 370 respondents distributed through 40 project teams, ranging in size from 3 to 39 individuals.
- ❖ **Procedure:** Online survey.
- ❖ **Measures:** Emotional intelligence was measured using the Workgroup EI Profile (WEIP-S).

Project Success Factors were measured using Pinto's (1990) Project Implementation Profile.
- ❖ **Leadership Team EI:** We compared the analyses using the mean, maximum, minimum, and standard deviation scores of leadership team EI.
- ❖ **Team Member Ratings of Project Success:** We computed average scores from all team members after obtaining satisfactory within-group agreement.

Results

- ❖ The highest EI score within a leadership team (maximum score) yielded the most significant correlations with team-rated project success.
- ❖ Importantly, we found that the *mean* EI score of leadership team was not significantly correlated with team member-rated project success.
- ❖ The model using maximum EI scores predicted a significant percentage of the overall variance in project success.
- ❖ The high maximum scores on the "awareness of own emotions" and "management of others' emotions" dimensions of EI had positive associations with team member-rated project success.
- ❖ We confirmed the larger influence of maximum team-level EI scores on project success by including both mean and maximum scores in a stepwise regression analysis.

Conclusions

- ❖ Our results support our hypothesis that a self-report measure of team leadership EI is significantly and positively correlated with project team members' rating of project success.
- ❖ We also found that assessing the leadership team's *maximum* EI is the best indicator.
- ❖ The member of the leadership group with the highest EI score seems to be the key to project success.
- ❖ Key managers require high EI and, in particular, ability to be aware of and to manage others' emotions.

Bibliography

- ❖ Jordan, P. J., & Lawrence, S. A. (2009). Emotional intelligence in teams: Development and initial validation of the short version of the Workgroup Emotional Intelligence Profile (WEIP-S). *Journal of Management and Organization*, 15, 452;
- ❖ Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence. P. Salovey & D. J. Sluyter (Eds.), *Emotional development and emotional intelligence* (pp.3–31). New York: Basic Books;
- ❖ Pinto, J. K. (1990). Project implementation profile: A tool to aid tracking and control. *International Journal of Project Management*, 173-182;
- ❖ Troth, A. C., Jordan, P. J., Lawrence, S. A., & Tse, H. H. (2012). A multilevel model of emotional skills, communication performance, task performance in teams. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33, 700-722.